

3-25-2010

Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 25, 2010

Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee

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Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee, "Minutes, Arts & Sciences Professional Standards Committee Meeting, Thursday, March 25, 2010" (2010). *Professional Standards Committee Minutes*. Paper 68.
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Professional Standards Committee—Draft Minutes
March 25, 2010, 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Bush 105

The meeting was convened at 4pm by Thomas Moore. Faculty members present were Joshua Almond, Erich Blosssey, Marc Fetscherin, Emily Russell, Claire Strom and Anca Voicu. Dean Laurie Joyner and Billy Kennedy were also present.

1) Old Business

- a. Feedback to administrators—President Duncan expressed reservations about moving forward with our current model during his conversations with C. Strom and E. Blosssey. After follow-up from T. Moore, L. Duncan came to understand the difference in the committee's position of this year as opposed to the model offered last year. L. Duncan requests a compromise where 1) questions in the survey must be reached by mutual consent (our current model gave EC final authority). E. Blosssey asked what happens in the case where we want a question focusing on performance. T. Moore replied that L. Duncan has moved away from that reservation. Duncan also requests: 2) the administrator could accompany the survey with a brief self-assessment. The committee likes this suggestion. 3) Duncan submits that how the administrator chooses to respond to the perceptions expressed by the faculty will be up to the administrator's discretion. E. Russell argued that all of the data she's reviewed says that for faculty feedback of administrators to work, there needs to be some sense that the voices of the faculty have been heard. The distinction between *if* the administrator responds and *how* he or she responds is key. L. Joyner offered that L. Duncan's suggestions reflect ideas that faculty have wanted already; these changes reflect a positive step. T. Moore added that insisting on EC final approval of questions is adversarial for no reason. L. Joyner asked, would this be part of an evaluative process from the Board of Trustees? T. Moore responded, no, this is distinct, but L. Duncan seems open to allowing this survey of feedback to be part of formal evaluation if the timing coincides. L. Joyner stressed that integration of feedback and evaluation needs to be codified moving forward so that we aren't making it up for each administrator. According to her reading of the charge of the PSC, it allows for input into this process; if, however, it's not the charge of the PSC, then the administration itself needs to move forward to codify the process. C. Strom acknowledged that at present it is important to maintain distinction between feedback and evaluation in order to move forward successfully. The first round of evaluation would include Dean of Faculty, Dean of Students, Provost, and President. The future tier includes Director of the Library, Dean of Admissions, VP of Institutional Advancement, VP of Business and Finance. E. Russell asked, where should the Holt Dean fit? And suggested that the position should be included with the first four. T. Moore has our original document, will make changes reflecting our discussion, and will approach current administrators with the new draft. We agreed that it is important to contact J. Eck in the spirit of involving him as early as possible in the process. T. Moore suggested moving forward with an emphasis on clarifying the process first, then discussing specific questions. L. Joyner asked, would feedback be annual? T. Moore responded, our

original proposal was biannual, but we may want to revisit that question. L. Joyner asked, who will see the results of the feedback survey? T. Moore responded, the results go to the administrator under review and immediate supervisor (with the exception of the president); no faculty group reviews the results. He added that this feedback is not intended to be punitive, but administrators would be expected to respond.

- b. Blended learning—AAC has considered the issue of blended learning and submitted to PSC a list of suggested guidelines for the administration of grant proposals (see attached). The PSC moved to lift the earlier motion to suspend review of the blended learning grant proposals.
- c. Reconsideration of SFCS grant—according to common practice, minutes were not recorded during grant review discussion.

T. Moore adjourned the meeting at 5pm.
Respectfully submitted by Emily Russell.

Attachments (1)

Final Report of the Academic Affairs Committee
Blended Learning Subcommittee
March 18, 2010

The Blended Learning (BL) Subcommittee was charged to study the BL issue and make recommendations to the Academic Affairs Committee. The recommendations of the subcommittee were submitted on February 22, 2010, and approved by AAC on March 15, 2010, subject to the revisions contained in this report.

RECOMMENDATION 1

We believe that AAC should encourage innovative approaches to pedagogy. AAC should not review courses currently being taught with BL pedagogy. BL pedagogy is not such a significant shift from traditional pedagogy that its use should be an A&S decision rather than an individual faculty decision.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Many Faculty Members might be interested in teaching a course using BL pedagogy, but they do not know much about it. Specifically, they do not know enough about BL pedagogy to develop a proposal for a course.

We recommend that IT be asked to develop and teach a seminar/workshop/course on BL pedagogy as part of the traditional May IT seminars for faculty. Such a seminar/workshop would provide useful information about faculty interest in learning and applying BL pedagogy.

We believe that any decision about compensation for such a seminar should be left up to the Dean of Faculty in consultation with the Chief Information Officer.

We believe that any decision about funding Requests for Proposals to revise existing courses or develop new courses using BL pedagogy should be postponed until after the faculty member participates in the BL seminar/workshop.

RECOMMENDATION 3

On a pilot basis, faculty members who complete the seminar on BL pedagogy would be able to apply for grants to revise existing courses to incorporate BL pedagogy. These courses would be offered during the 10-11 Academic year. Applications would describe the existing course and the proposed modifications to incorporate BL pedagogy.

Applications would be reviewed by the Professional Standards Committee using the following guidelines to maintain consistency between BL pedagogy & other pedagogies currently deployed in the College of Arts & Sciences or the Hamilton Holt School.

Guideline 1:

Courses should be based on best practices of adult learning and distance education. The burden of proof that these practices are being applied should be on the person/department proposing the course.

Guideline 2

Courses should be appropriate for BL pedagogy (for example: BL pedagogy is certainly appropriate for course on mediated interaction, simulation of scientific lab experiments, or technology based instruction. BL might also be appropriate in courses with heavy content (facts, vocabulary, or technical skills), but probably not in interpersonal skills courses. The burden of proof that the course is appropriate to BL pedagogy should be on the person/department proposing the course.

Guideline 3:

Courses taught with BL pedagogy will cover the same amount of material as traditional courses (37.5-40 contact hours, about 160 total hours for a 4 credit course) and have the same amount of time-on-task. However, due to the nature of the class, some weekly lectures will be replaced with the requirements that students read the primary content/material on their own. Therefore, the reading assignments could be greater than those in a similar traditional class.

Guideline 4:

Courses taught with BL pedagogy will have the same standards for attendance and participation for synchronous classes as traditional courses.

Guideline 5:

Most courses taught with BL pedagogy will also be offered in a face-to-face format to provide students with choices.

Guideline 6:

Courses taught with BL pedagogy will have the same learning objectives and learning assessments as traditional courses.

Guideline 7:

Ordinarily, the percentage of class meetings that will be face to face will be at least 65%. SACS standards require a minimum of 51% of class meetings to be face-to-face or synchronous. The lower minimum will be appropriate for courses teaching ABOUT blended learning & mediate communication. If the percentage of face-to-face class meetings is less the 65% the burden of justification will be on the person/department proposing the course.

Guideline 8:

Ordinarily, time spent in asynchronous, out of class interactions will not be considered contact hours towards the 40 contact hour minimum in A&S or the 37.5 contact hour in HHS.

Guideline 9:

Most courses using BL methodology will introduce the BL technology interfaces at the beginning of the course. Students should receive a comprehensive syllabus and calendar for the course semester at the first meeting. If the BL methodology/technology is not introduced at the

beginning of the course, the burden of justification will be on the person/department proposing the course.

Guideline 10:

Ordinarily, courses using BL pedagogy will provide clear, written instructions and grading criteria for all assignments, distributed through the syllabus, handouts, and postings on the class website.

Guideline 11:

Ordinarily, courses using BL pedagogy will have weekly Faculty / student contact (face to face or mediated via chat). Class calendars should indicate faculty/student synchronous contact at least every two weeks to ensure pacing and clarification of expectations.

Guideline 12:

Courses using BL pedagogy will have weekly interaction in the form of written and graded assignments, interaction between students (group work, online discussions, or projects), and interaction with faculty through feedback and/or personal contact

Guideline 13:

Courses using BL pedagogy require faculty to provide more individualized, comprehensive written feedback on a faster, more regular basis. Students working independently require more immediate feedback to questions and graded assignments. Faculty should recognize that this kind of feedback to students is critical and because it is one of the primary ways students are able to learn in this environment.

Guideline 14:

Courses using BL pedagogy will require at least two written essays/papers to which the instructor responds with extensive comments and feedback (as opposed to just giving a grade or marking errors). This feedback is to help the students understand course content and expectations for subsequent work.

Guideline 15:

Instructors in courses using BL pedagogy will establish a course Guideline for timeliness of response to students. For example, “all questions will be answered within 24 hours during the week” or “all graded assignments will be returned to students within one week of receipt”.

RECOMMENDATION 4

After the course has been taught, the instructor would report back to AAC about the appropriateness of the guidelines for structuring courses using BL pedagogy; the usefulness of the seminar/workshop in preparing the course; the experience of teaching with BL pedagogy; student evaluations of the course & instructor; and instructor evaluations of student learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The AAC should use the BL guidelines as part of the review any new course that will be taught with BL pedagogy.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Courses (previously approved by AAC) now being taught with BL pedagogy should not be considered as new courses requiring re-approval by AAC so long as they abide by the approved BL guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,

Don Rogers
Chris Fuse
Anne Hilb

What is Blended Learning (BL)?

- Denotatively, BL refers to a learning experience incorporating a combination of in class and out of class learning activities.
- Connotatively, BL refers to a learning experience which combines in classroom, face to face interactions, with out-of-classroom computer assisted/mediated learning activities.

Why are we considering BL?

- Creates Institutional Flexibility
- Increases Faculty Flexibility/Agility/Adaptability
- Offers Student convenience
- Provides More access points
- The Kaludis Report suggested it

How would/could we use Blended Learning?

- Rollins campus is closed (by a hurricane or pandemic)
- Rollins students in Australia/China/etc will be able to take courses with Rollins students in Winter Park
- Rollins is committed to continuing, lifelong education and more of those programs are online or blended
- Rollins is committed to innovation and needs to stay current with developments in instructional technology

Fast Facts

- Rollins has and does offer BL courses already
- BL does not reduce the number of contact hours
- The level of knowledge acquisition is comparable in BL and pure classroom learning
- The level of comprehension is comparable in BL and pure classroom learning
- The level of knowledge application is comparable in BL and pure classroom learning
- The level of motivational/inspirational learning is much higher in classroom settings
- Some (mostly technical) skills are better learned in BL
- Most interpersonal skills are better learned in classroom settings
- The research on higher order conceptual skills is inconclusive (whatever you believe, there seems to be research that proves you're right)

